

REMARKS

Claims 29-73 are in the application.

Claims 29, 44, 59 and 57 are amended.

Claims 29-73 are rejected as being obvious under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over Shepley in view of Balintfy, and optionally in view of Williams III, Ecer and/or MacGregor et al.

Applicant has amended the independent claims to clearly recite that the optimization is joint based on BOTH economic parameters and the defined user characteristic. While applicants have previously argued that the word "and" in this clause inherently requires this conjunctive reading, the word "both" makes this abundantly clear, without raising new issues of patentability.

In addition, claims 29 and 44 now recite that the "presenting" step is now "optimally sorted", rather than simply optimized. This sorting is supported at least in prior claims 34 and 49, and thus do not comprise new issues of patentability.

With respect to the applied prior art, clearly Balintfy has no means for outputting any sorted set of records. Shepley, on the other hand, while incorporating a general purpose computer and output system, which presumably could be programmed to produce a sorted list, does not. Likewise, the apparent sorting used by Williams III is alphabetic (Figs. 10-11) or arbitrary. Clearly these references do not teach that significant and useful information is to be conveyed by the order of presentation.

Claim 34 is further rejected in view of Williams III. However, the application of Williams III with respect to the sorted records is lacking in the January 17, 2001 Office Action. Rather, the Examiner states that this aspect is rejected on Official Notice. In fact, while presentation of sorted records is indeed well known, a process for optimally sorting records based on multiple domain-specific keys is not well known, and the application of Official Notice to

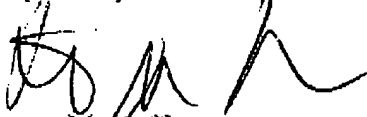
reach a contrary conclusion is not supported. Claim 49 is rejected further in view of MacGregor et al., which discloses sequential sort keys which are distinguished by the optimal sorting on joint parameters according to the present invention.

Claims 59 and 67 are distinguished from claims 29 and 44 by proving a "ranking" of the records. Sorting and ranking are related concepts. MacGregor, with its sequential sort keys, is distinguished by the optimization of the presented ranking of the records based on both the economic parameters and the relevance parameter, according to the present invention.

Claim 67 is further amended to eliminate apparently superfluous language ("with respect to the class"), and to provide proper antecedent basis for the final use of the phrase "economic parameter".

In conclusion, applicant's position is that none of the references, alone or in combination, teach or suggest that an optimal ranking or sorting of records based on a plurality of distinct criteria, including user characteristics and economic parameters. The rejection must therefore fail, and it is therefore respectfully submitted that the present application is now in form for allowance.

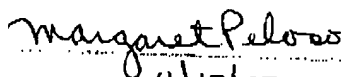
Respectfully submitted,


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